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Their Men in Santo Domingo

THE Dominican crisis reached a critical point on May 16: General Imbert's junta was not yet strong enough to mount a decisive offensive against the Constitutionallists, and the U.S. force could no longer suppress them unaided, especially in view of the overwhelming protest movement in all parts of the world. It was at this critical juncture that Washington sent in its "political team." Led by McGeorge Bundy, President Johnson's special assistant on national security, it included Under-Secretary of State Mann, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Vaughn, and Deputy Defence Secretary Vance. They immediately began negotiations with General Imbert, with a view, the U.S. press reported, to working out a peaceful settlement.

However, even from the meagre information seeping into the press it appears that the Bundy group were negotiating anything but a peaceful settlement. They discussed ways and means of suppressing the patriotic movement and bolstering Imbert's junta by "economic assistance."

General Antonio Imbert Barreras, the *Wall Street Journal* wrote on May 12, is an adroit "political manoeuvrer," the kind of "strong man" the United States wants in Dominica. Whether or not he will become a second Trujillo or remain just a temporary Wall Street place-

man, an understanding of why Washington's choice fell on him is essential for a clear picture of what is happening in this small Caribbean island republic.

Dominican Lobby

Mr. Averell Harriman, President Johnson's special representative in Latin America, declared on May 6: "We have no interests in the Dominican Republic."

Whom he meant by "we" was not specified. But the fact is that the U.S. monopolies, and notably the powerful Rockefeller, Morgan and Mellon groups, have a very deep interest in everything in Dominica that can be made to produce profit. Agriculture is entirely controlled by the South Puerto Rico Sugar Company and United Fruit; mining, and particularly bauxite deposits, by the Aluminium Co. of America; banking by the First National City Bank of New York, America's second biggest. U.S. investments in Dominica are estimated at \$250 million.

But it is not only a matter of investments. There is a lot of politics, corrupt politics, behind the investments.

Trujillo's military intelligence chief, Arturo R. Espallat, tells the story, or at least part of it, in his book "Trujillo, the Last Caesar." He

says that a number of high-ranking Washington officials have a personal interest in Dominican affairs. All of them received handouts from the Dominican lobby. Espallat gives the price list: an ordinary Representative "would cost about \$5,000 or less," Committee Chairmen were rated at "about three times that

much." Senators were worth very much more, and Chairmen of Senate Committees rated anything between \$50,000 and \$75,000. Money was not the only inducement. One State Department official, for instance, was "provided with a blonde." In fact, the lobby had a string of blondes on tap for influential southern Senators and New York Congressmen.

Trujillo's files disappeared after his death—removed, Espallat says, by U.S. secret agents. An American correspondent, Robert Jones of the *Indianapolis Star*, wrote: The files "are supposed to have been spirited out of the Dominican Republic and are believed to be in Washington.... The evidence is believed to be in the hands of certain officials of the U.S. government—but which officials not even the investigators seem to know."

Some of the details came to light during investigations by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and some of the disclosures found their way into the press. It appears that beneficiaries of the Dominican lobby include Senators Strom Thurmond, Allen J. Ellender and George A. Smathers, also House of Representatives Speaker John W. McCormack and Congressmen Cooley, Jackson and Withrow. Others listed as recipients of Dominican largesse are Senators Martin and Byrd,

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Henry F. Holland (Assistant Secretary of State under Eisenhower), Robert Hinshaw (son-in-law of John Foster Dulles), Colonel Gordon Moore (related to Eisenhower) and, of course, Bobby Baker, who until 1963 was Secretary of the Senate Democratic majority. Together with Senator Smathers, Bobby invested a sizable sum in Santo Domingo gambling houses, and presumably both still collect dividends. Smathers, incidentally, is not merely one of the two Senators from Florida; he is an influential personage in Washington, "among those included in the inner sanctum," the *New York Times* says.

The Senate committee also established that the lobby is supported by two of America's biggest newspaper chains, Hearst and the United States Press Association, which caters to 1,399 newspapers. One can well imagine what kind of "news" they give the American reader.

How Imbert Climbed to the Top

On a night in May, four years ago, a Chevrolet was speeding along the road from San Cristobal to Santo Domingo. A volley from a hidden machine-gun sent it tumbling into the roadside ditch. The driver and his passenger, an elderly man in a general's uniform, were killed. Their bodies lay at the bottom of the ditch. The elderly man was Rafael Leonidas Trujillo, the Dominican dictator.

The U.S. press immediately accused "Left subversives." Senator Smathers demanded that Marines be sent to investigate and punish the guilty. But the clamour soon died down. It was learned that the murder had been engineered not without the assistance of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

By this time Trujillo had become a hindrance to the United States. His lust for power and money—all Dominican firms were expected to give

him half of their foreign exchange revenue—had brought the country to the brink of ruin. Internationally, Trujillo was hopelessly discredited. Even the Organization of American States had denounced his regime as inhuman. Washington decided it was time to replace him with a more suitable figurehead.

The choice fell on Antonio Imbert, governor of Puerto Plata Province. Two U.S. officials, Consul Henry Dearborn and Consular officer John Barfield, contacted him and cautiously proposed that he head a plot against the dictator. Imbert did not have to be asked twice. He got together a group of terrorists, armed them and sent them to carry out the Washington sentence.

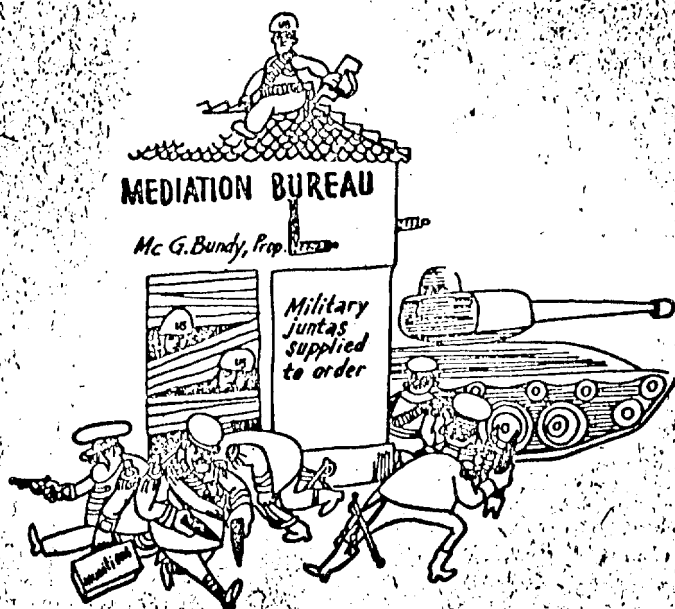
Then followed a reign of terror organized and directed by Ramfis Trujillo, son of the late dictator. The plotters were caught and punished, also many Dominicans who had had no part in it at all. Imbert was not touched, though Ramfis knew of the part he had played in the murder of his father. The *New York New Republic* (Apr. 13, 1963) explained why: the CIA had warned Ramfis not to touch Imbert, "U.S. diplomats were telling him that if he behaved himself he could leave the country a rich man, which he did."

All the other members of the Trujillo family left the country too, presumably "rich men." The Dominicans thought they had seen the last of Trujilloism. Imbert, who had never served in the army, was made a Brigadier General as a reward for his part in "removing" Trujillo.

Subsequent events showed that the CIA considered Imbert "its man in Santo Domingo." But Washington was careful to take into account the experience of Cuba—if a dictator depends entirely on armed force, he cannot hope to last long.

And so there began a political build-up of General Imbert. He was made Minister of Justice, Police and Internal Security in the State Coun-

Mediating in Santo Domingo



Kretschmar in Neues Deutschland

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oil set up to run the country. The *Wall Street Journal* wrote that he had been "quietly building upon his role as a chief of police by building up the police force itself and reaching for influence over the army." By the time of the first presidential elections, December 1962, Imbert had managed to knock together an alliance of minor political parties. He was not, however, destined to become the constitutional head of state: his political coalition proved too weak against Juan Bosch, the liberal opposition candidate.

Colonel Reed's Mission

President Bosch was inaugurated on February 27, 1963. Both in Washington and Santo Domingo much was made of the fact that he was the first elected head of state. U.S. Marines participated in the inaugural parade, and President Kennedy, anxious to emphasize his "new approach" in Latin America, sent Vice-President Johnson to represent him at the inaugural ceremonies.

Less than a year later President Bosch was overthrown by a group of army officers and deported to Puerto Rico. There he told newsmen that he had known about the plot, "led by an Air Force colonel," but could do nothing to prevent it. When he demanded the colonel's discharge, he was removed from office and sent out of the country.

Who was this mysterious Air Force colonel whom President Bosch would not name? His name was disclosed at the time by the *New York World-Telegram*: Wessin y Wessin.

And so, another servant of Washington appeared on the scene. Imbert had got rid of Trujillo, Colonel Wessin was largely instrumental in overthrowing President Bosch. But he, too, was no more than a tool of the U.S. monopolies, which were anxious to get rid of the Dominican President because he had encroached on some of their interests.

Both the murder of Trujillo and the overthrow of Bosch had been masterminded by the CIA. Senator Wayne Morse revealed that in a speech in the Senate on October 2, 1963. It was later confirmed by the *New York Herald Tribune* (October 20, 1963), which said that the "architect" of the plot was Colonel Lear B. Reed, a CIA official and its chief Dominican expert.

President Kennedy was annoyed by this military coup and ordered a quarantine of the newly formed junta: it was denied diplomatic recognition and American aid in any form. But not for long. In October 1963, Colonel Reed reappeared in Santo Domingo and told the junta (according to the *Herald Tribune*) "that it could ignore the diplomats' warnings and still get United States recognition in a matter of days."

President Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963, and one of his successor's first foreign-policy moves was to recognize the junta.

Unruly Puppet?

The Constitutionalist rising in Santo Domingo upset Washington's plans. Both "strong men," Imbert and Wessin, had to be brought into the picture again—Wessin to crush the Constitutionalist forces, and Imbert to form a "government of national reconstruction" and "re-establish order."

From April 30 to May 7, Imbert was on the U.S. flagship *Boxer* in Santo Domingo harbour, where, the *New York Times* said, he was being "groomed for political leadership." After the "grooming" he returned to the capital to form a military-civilian junta, which was later reorganized into a "government of national reconstruction." But he could not "re-establish order," for Wessin failed to put down Constitutionalist resistance.

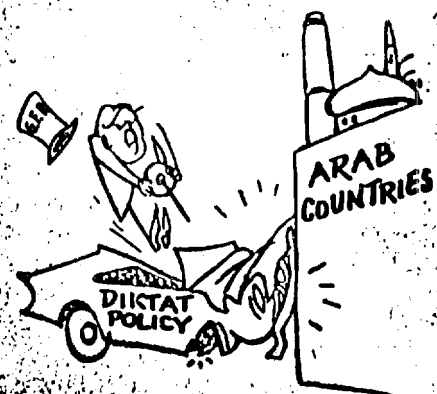
Washington found it stood little chance of building up Imbert as a

"popular national figure," and concentrated on suppressing patriotic resistance. More troops were sent in to support Imbert, and his junta was given \$750,000 by way of financial assistance.

But there was also the international protest movement to reckon with, and Washington pretended a "change of tactics": Bundy's team was to help form a "coalition government." The Constitutionlists agreed, but objected to General Imbert, who, in turn, rejected any negotiations with the "rebels."

Washington, of course, yielded. The Bundy mission and the American press are trying to convince the world that the United States is powerless against the "unruly general."

In launching armed intervention in Dominica, the United States aimed at more than protecting Wall Street interests. The Marines and paratroopers are there to demonstrate to the whole of Latin America that Dominica will remain an operational base against national-liberation movements in any part of the area. Washington's men in Santo Domingo are helping it maintain that posture.



B. Marinov, in Otechestven Front (Sofia)

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